

What is light pencil pressure?

- Light pencil pressure means pressing too softly on a pencil when writing or colouring.

Why is proper pencil pressure important?

- To improve the speed and neatness of writing
- To make drawing and printing more legible

What are some causes of light pencil pressure?

- Weak hand or finger strength
- Poor pencil grasp
- Difficulty with sensory processing (avoiding touch, poor awareness of body in space)

A child that applies light pencil pressure may do the following:

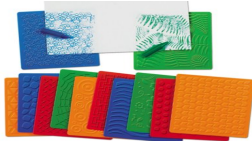
- Draw and print so lightly that the work is hard to see
- Frequently drop the pencil
- Use a weak pencil grasp
- Switch hands due to fatigue
- Produce less work due to weakness or fatigue

Practice the following strategies to improve pencil pressure:

- Use a weighted pencil or hand/wrist weights to increase input to the hand (see an Occupational Therapist for a weighted pencil or try placing a hex nut on the pencil to add weight).



- Practice shading during colouring. Choose one coloured pencil and shade each section of a picture differently by how much pressure is used.
- Ensure the pencil tip is sharp (a mechanical pencil is always sharp and may be beneficial).
- Use short pencils or a pencil grip to improve grasp.
- Use a slant board to help position wrist and hand.
- Use markers or gel pencils to make work easier to see.
- Use a piece of carbon paper between two sheets of paper and draw a picture. Press hard enough to make an imprint appear on the bottom paper like “magic.”
- Place paper over bumpy material, sandpaper, rubbing plates or plastic needlepoint canvas and write or colour on the paper to feel the texture.



- Increase hand and finger strength by playing with playdough, climbing on playground equipment, building with interlocking toys, etc.